

PeopleFor's

BIG IDEAS SUMMIT



2022 JUNE 16-19
ATLANTA

#BIGIDEAS22



SUMMIT GUIDE



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Summit Agenda At-A-Glance

THURSDAY, JUNE 16TH

12:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Registration Open
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	Orientation & Welcome Lunch
2:15 PM – 4:00 PM	Women’s Roundtable
6:30 PM – 9:00 PM	Opening Reception

FRIDAY, JUNE 17TH

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Breakfast
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Welcome
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Keynote/ Fireside Chat: Defending Democracy and the Right to Vote: Where We’ve Been, Where We Are, and the Road Ahead
11:00 AM – 11:15 AM	BREAK
11:15 AM – 12:15 PM	Morning Plenary: Freedom on the Front Lines: The Fight to Protect the Right to Vote
12:25 PM – 1:25 PM	Breakout Sessions
1:25 PM – 1:35 PM	TRANSITION
1:35 PM – 2:30 PM	LUNCH – TED-Style Talks
2:30 PM – 3:45 PM	Afternoon Plenary: America was Never America: Democracy, Race-Based Violence, and the Struggle for Justice in Black America
3:45 PM – 4:00 PM	BREAK
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Afternoon Fireside Chat: Where Do We Go from Here - Community or Chaos?
5:00 PM	Close out
5:30 PM	Caucus space available
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Legacy Hour

SATURDAY, JUNE 18TH

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Breakfast
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM	Morning Fireside Chat: Faith, Activism, Advocacy, and the Fight for Justice
10:45 AM – 11:15 AM	Briefing: The State of Police Violence and Reimagining Public Safety
11:15 AM – 12:15 PM	Morning Plenary: Building Community and Coalitions for Change – Lessons from the Field
12:15 PM – 12:25 PM	TRANSITION
12:25 PM – 1:25 PM	Breakout Sessions
1:25 PM – 1:30 PM	TRANSITION
1:30 PM – 2:15 PM	LUNCH Briefing: All Safe: Transforming Public Safety
2:15 PM – 2:30 PM	GROUP PHOTO
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM	Afternoon Plenary: Signs of Progress: The Ithaca Model and Mayors Delivering on Bold Solutions to Police Violence
3:30 PM – 3:45 PM	BREAK
3:45 PM – 5:00 PM	Afternoon Fireside Chat: Public Safety Beyond Policing: Calls to Invest in Creating Truly Safe Communities
5:00 PM	Close out
7:00 PM	Women’s Dinner

SUNDAY, JUNE 19TH

7:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Breakfast Available
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Interfaith Service *Offsite at local church
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Closing Plenary: Defending Truth & The Freedom to Learn
12:00 PM - 12:30 PM	Closing Remarks

Welcome Letters



Ben Jealous

Dear Friends,

It's my honor to welcome you to our first People For the American Way Big Ideas Summit in Atlanta, Georgia. Atlanta has been a cradle of the civil rights movement, and like our foremothers and forefathers who assembled here to find the courage and inspiration to fight injustice, we are gathering now to find similar courage and inspiration in each other. Over the next few days we will hear from some of our country's most dynamic elected officials, faith leaders, civil rights leaders and activists about solutions to the biggest challenges of our time. These solutions are anchored in our common values, which we can sum up in the familiar phrase: Truth, Justice and the American Way.

Truth is under attack in our country today, as forces of oppression seek to stifle the teaching of history and to rewrite recent history themselves, by perpetuating lies about our last election. Valuing truth means protecting key freedoms. It starts with the freedom of educators to teach and students to learn the full story of our nation's rich, often troubled, and ultimately complicated past, so that every child is prepared to participate and lead in our democracy. And it doesn't stop there: we are called upon to counter the forces of hate and bigotry who seek to further entrench their own power by undermining truth. This is a charge we accept with humility and commitment, and it guides our steps every day.

Justice is at the core of our shared belief in the promise of America. Today we believe that true justice means transforming our public safety systems, and protecting the freedom to live in peace without fear of unwarranted police violence. It means supporting communities to adopt new models for public safety departments. It means that nowhere in this country should it be a crime to be Black or Brown, or LGBTQ+, or unhoused, or ill, or without financial resources. At this Summit, we will be unveiling a comprehensive new report, All Safe:

Transforming Public Safety, that outlines real solutions communities can take to shift away from old models of policing to fresh alternatives that will make all of us safer. I am very proud of this exceptional report and look forward to sharing it with you.

Finally, the American Way is rooted in our profound commitment to representative democracy. It is the freedom to vote and have our views fairly represented. In its ideal form, it means that the candidate who earns the most popular votes in the country should be the one to secure the presidency. We have work to do on this front. Our antiquated Electoral College system has robbed us of authentic representation over the years, and more than once it has elevated persons to the presidency even though they lost the popular vote. It is time to explore alternative ways to conduct presidential elections in our country.

Our challenges are big, but our faith and our values are bigger. I invite all of us to enter every space at this Summit with open minds, open hearts, and the curiosity to learn from one another. While you are here, ask questions, speak what is in your heart, and approach every person with love. Together we are a powerful force for good. I look forward to being in community with all of you over the next few days, and to taking our movement for Truth, Justice and the American Way to a more meaningful level.

Thank you and God bless you as we come together in peace and hope.

Warmly,

Ben Jealous
President,
People For the American Way



Svante Myrick

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Atlanta and our Big Ideas Summit.

This Summit represents a new paradigm for People For the American Way: the creation of a forum where our Young Elected Officials network, African American Religious Affairs network, board members, guest experts, activists and People For leaders can all come together to share and generate ideas to help our communities succeed. In my past role as Director of Youth Leadership Programs at People For, I met many of you at our YEO convenings. This year's gathering is even more expansive and inclusive. It's an opportunity for the kind of creative thinking and problem-solving that flourishes when leaders from diverse sectors collaborate. It's an exciting time, and I know we will make the most of it.

We face many challenges, and one of the most urgent is the crisis of police violence and public safety. This issue is very close to my heart. As Mayor of Ithaca, New York, I worked hard to move our city in the direction of a new model for public safety. Our City Council voted to replace our traditional police department with a Department of Public Safety, staffed both by armed and unarmed responders. This is a model that I believe has tremendous promise for application in communities across the country. It offers advantages on every level, reducing the risk of harm from armed encounters with police, treating residents more humanely and addressing their medical and psychological needs, reducing stress on police officers, building trust with residents, and saving communities' money and resources. It is, in my view, a win on all fronts.

Now, as Executive Director of People For the American Way, I have the opportunity to work toward the goal of transforming public safety nationwide. At this Summit, People For will share a new report, All Safe: Transforming Public Safety. The report lifts up our Ithaca Public Safety Model and also examines factors that contribute to police violence. It offers communities a range of options for improving the ways in which they deliver public safety services. You, as our valued members of the People For community, will have an opportunity to take a first look at the report, give us your feedback, and learn how to plug into the movement to transform public safety. This is a movement that is gathering strength across the country.

As the next few days unfold, I hope you will have every opportunity to catch up with old friends and make new ones. I hope you will be inspired by leaders and ideas that might prompt you to think of things in a new way. We are all part of this community because we have chosen service – in elected office, in the pulpit, at the grassroots level or in nonprofit activism – as our life's work. It's always been such a great privilege to work with all of you, and we make each other better every day.

Thanks for being you and for being here.

Very best,

Svante Myrick
Executive Director,
People For the American Way



Raquel Jones

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Atlanta and People For's 2022 Big Ideas Summit! After two years of being unable to gather in person, I am excited to be in community with you this weekend, and am proud of the work our staff has done to make this gathering informative and impactful for all attendees. It is our mission to make this space focused on building coalition and supporting your personal and professional growth; a reaffirmation of our shared progressive values; and a space where you can learn and share good ideas that will help make life better for those too long left behind in our communities.

Our 2022 Summit will be different from any gathering we've had. We are gathered as members of People For's Leadership Programs, the Young Elected Officials (YEO) Network, African American Minister Leadership Conference (AAMLC), progressive organizers, partners, experts, and scholars, all critical to this work, to dig deeper into issues impacting our communities and shaping the fabric of our democracy.

I am inspired by your dedication, tenacity, and bravery in the face of tremendous challenges. You all are our nation's most dynamic progressive leaders and this space will be a celebration of the groundbreaking work People For the American Way, our networks, and our members have done to build a pipeline of progressive leadership and make our nation freer and fairer for all of us.

My hopes are that this Summit will be a place where those things are not just encouraged and strengthened, but also showcased. We've built in plenty of opportunity this weekend for us to celebrate your accomplishments and use them as an inspiration for your peers. So many groundbreaking ideas and movements have originated from our leadership programs, and I expect that the conversations and ideas produced here this weekend will ripple far beyond this city and this gathering.

I am also excited to reconnect with so many familiar faces and to welcome new attendees to our family over the course of the weekend. Our movement is growing, and our moment is now. I am grateful every day to be a part of this work and I sincerely thank you for being the reason why.

Best,

Raquel Jones

Director, Leadership Programs
People For the American Way



Rev. Leslie Watson-Wilson

Dear Network and Ministerial Alliance Members and Friends;

For those of us who are Christian, our sacred text tells us in Ecclesiastes 3:1-7, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven ... a time to keep silence, and a time to speak..." (KJV) Thank you for attending The Big Ideas Summit in this season, at this time, to not be silent but to speak with a unified voice on things that matter!

What matters to us is defending reproductive justice, protecting democracy, recognizing that the vote is connected to every aspect of our lives, addressing white supremacy, demanding public safety, and working together toward a beloved community in these United States.

While we are together, let us collectively and actively listen to every presenter, meditate on each presentation, take in, reflect, pause, and think strategically on the lessons learned from the challenges of the recent past and the promises of the future.

Join us on Friday at 6:30 p.m. for The Legacy Hour where we will honor the life and contribution of the late South Carolina State Senator, Reverend Dr. Clementa Pinckney, pastor of Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC on the 7th anniversary of his assignation and that of eight others. We will also celebrate the life of Reverend Dr. Robert P. Shine, Sr., of Philadelphia, PA, one of the founding members of African American Ministers In Action.

Also, join me in thanking Raquel Jones and all who helped in some way to make this time in this season a safe space filled with the Spirit that will encourage, inspire, excite, confirm that we can and we will defeat hate, defeat misinformation, defeat chaos in the days, weeks, months to come!

On behalf of AAMLC Co-Chairs Reverends Brendolyn Boseman, Timothy McDonald (founder), and Melvin Wilson, welcome to this season, this time, the Big Ideas Summit!

Blessings Overflow,

Reverend Leslie Wilson, National Director
African American Religious Affairs (AARA)
African American Ministers Leadership Council (AAMLC)

About the Big Ideas Summit

People For's Big Ideas Summit 2022

It's been over two years since People For the American Way or any of its leadership networks have hosted an in-person gathering to discuss and plan the future of our progressive movement -- and the stakes are now higher than they've ever been.

The world was ravaged by a global pandemic; we took to the streets in response to the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless other Black Americans; and we went to the polls, defended the nation against insurrection, and are fighting against an unprecedented assault on the right to vote.

People For's Inaugural Big Ideas Summit brings us together to talk about the essential progress we must make against suppression, obstruction, and disinformation from the Far Right.

Coalitions are key. For the first time in years, we're excited to bring the diverse voices across our coalitions together.

Our 2022 Summit is different from any gathering we've had. We have brought together members of our Young Elected Officials (YEO) Network, African American Minister Leadership Conference (AAMLC), Front Line Leaders Academy (FLLA) Alumni, progressive activists and organizers, partners, experts, scholars, and others critical to this work to discuss the predominant issues threatening our communities and our democracy.

Summit is a gathering for our nation's most dynamic progressive leaders to learn, develop, and network. It is also a celebration of the groundbreaking work People For the American Way, our networks, and our members have done to build a pipeline of progressive leadership and make our nation freer and fairer for all of us.



Big Ideas in Focus

Defending Democracy and the Right to Vote

The integrity of our elections and voting rights are under unprecedented attack.

With federal protections gutted, many states have chosen to aggressively chip away at the right to vote through new voter suppression laws or maintain regressive voting laws all while local officials question the outcomes of fair elections. In 2021, 19 states passed 34 laws restricting access to voting. The efforts to restrict voting have continued into this year. This year, legislators in at least 27 states have already introduced, pre-filed, or carried over 250 bills with restrictive provisions.

While the Far Right would like us to believe these actions are race-neutral ignores all the evidence, impacting how and if the votes of mostly Black Americans will be accessed, cast, accepted, and counted. We also expect unprecedented interference in the electoral process by Far-Right activists at polling places in every state, especially where Black voters can tip the balance in critical races.

Our democracy hangs in the balance.

We will use Summit as an opportunity to dive deep into this real threat to the future of our democracy, bring those fighting these attacks to the table, and shape our work in the critical days ahead.

Reimagining Policing and Public Safety

The killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless other Black Americans sparked a new era in the fight against police violence. Millions of people across the country have taken to the streets calling for comprehensive and transformative reform to our systems of public safety.

In the wake of the unrest, local leaders are seeking real progress. Several cities and counties have responded to these calls for action and passed new measures seeking to remove school resource officers from school districts; create an all-traffic force; and reform the use of force and accountability within police departments. However, there is still a lack of truly transformative reform to our system of public safety.

We believe that we must transform our systems of public safety to end police violence and strengthen our democracy. We will use Summit as an opportunity to envision bold solutions to our nation's public safety challenges and explore the work People For has joined alongside elected leaders across the country to make that vision real.



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Summit 2022 Georgia Host Committee

Members of our various networks across the State of Georgia are excited to welcome you to Atlanta for our Inaugural Big Ideas Summit! These changemakers are moving the needle for progress in Georgia and contributing tremendously to the work of People For the American Way across the nation.



Brea Baker
Atlanta - FLLA



Pastor Jamal Bryant
Atlanta - AAMLC



Commissioner Mariah Parker
Athens-Clarke County - YEO Network



Rep. Park Cannon
Atlanta - YEO Network



Everton Blair
Gwinnett - YEO Network, Chariman



Rev. Tim McDonald
PFAW Board Co-Chair - AAMLC



Rev. Dr. Mercuria Chase-Williams
Atlanta - AAMLC

About People For the American Way

People For the American Way and its affiliate, People For the American Way Foundation, are progressive advocacy organizations founded to fight right-wing extremism and build a democratic society that implements the ideals of freedom, equality, opportunity and justice for all. We encourage civic participation, defend fundamental rights, and fight to dismantle systemic barriers to equitable opportunity.

Our Vision and History

People For the American Way Foundation was founded in 1981 by legendary television and film producer Norman Lear, the late Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, and a group of business, civic, religious, and civil rights leaders who were disturbed by the divisive rhetoric of newly politicized televangelists. Advocacy affiliate People For the American Way was founded soon after.

We are dedicated to making the promise of America real for every American.

Our vision of the American Way is a vibrantly diverse society in which the laws are just and applied equitably; where everyone has the freedom, opportunity and access to pursue their dreams; and where all people are encouraged to participate in civic and political life. Our America acknowledges its history, respects difference and dissent, combats hatred and bigotry, nurtures creativity, and seeks justice and equity for all.

Our Mission

People For the American Way works to build a democratic society that implements the ideals of freedom, equality, opportunity and justice for all. We encourage civic participation, defend fundamental rights, and fight to dismantle systemic barriers to equitable opportunity. We fight against right-wing extremism and the injustice it fosters.



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Our Leadership Networks

About the Young Elected Officials Network (YEO Network)

The YEO Network, a nonpartisan program of People For the American Way, is the first and only national initiative to provide a network of support to the newest generation of progressive leaders at every level of elected office.

The Network was founded in 2005 with the mission to unite and support elected leaders ages 35 and under who share a passion for building communities that reflect values of freedom, fairness, and opportunity for all. Since then, the Network has grown to include more than 1,300 elected officials across the country in offices ranging from local school boards to the United States Congress.

We provide cutting-edge programming, investing in the full pipeline of progressive leadership and building sustained relationships with our members. We provide the resources young elected officials need to effectively impact policy, foster their own development and professional growth, and elevate their leadership in the broader progressive movement.

About the African American Ministers Leadership Council (AAMLC)

The African American Religious Affairs program works to build a strong ecumenical association of progressive pastors, clergy, theologians, seminarians, and ministry lay leaders who will encourage African American churches and communities to become more civically engaged and promote social justice programs and policies in areas of public education, health care, equal justice, civic participation and economic justice for all.

Representing 2,200 people across the country, leaders participate in strategic trainings, issue briefings, projects, and partnerships to faithfully and effectively provide a progressive voice and presence that counters Far Right religious rhetoric and advances a vision of “a beloved community.” AARA is recognized by its members as a ministry of initiatives that work with Christian men and women who believe in help and not harm, power and not pain, and hope in the face of hopelessness.

About the Front Line Leaders Academy (FLLA)

The Front Line Leaders Academy (FLLA) provides values-based training and leadership development to individuals seeking positive social change in their communities. We work with our network of alumni and Young Elected Officials to create a sustained community and comprehensive curriculum for each fellowship class.

Our mission is to develop women and people of color into campaign professionals who win elections and create a new progressive political system of truly representative government and deliver for marginalized communities.

Fellows participate in training conferences covering a wide range of political and organizing skills and tactics, including how to be an effective campaign manager, finance director, communications director, field organizer, and candidate. By graduation, FLLA Fellows have developed a wide range of political skills and have compiled a resources workbook that helps them to be effective local leaders.

Over 60% of FLLA graduates have gone on to work on a campaign or run for office themselves.

Detailed Agenda

Date	Details	Speakers	Location
Thursday, June 16th			
12:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Registration Open		4th Floor Coat Check
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM	Orientation & Welcome Lunch		Studio 3 & 4
2:15 PM – 4:00 PM	Women's Roundtable		Studio 5
6:30 PM – 9:00 PM	Opening Reception <i>How the Far Right is Imposing on our Freedom to Learn</i>		Great Room 1 & 2
7:00 PM	Evening Fireside Chat: Fighting the Far Right's Attack on the Freedom to Learn	Elie Mystal Ben Jealous, President, People For the American Way	Pool Deck
Friday, June 17th			
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Breakfast		
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Welcome	Raquel Jones Ben Jealous	Great Room 1 & 2
10:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Keynote/ Fireside Chat: <i>Defending Democracy and the Right to Vote: Where We've Been, Where We Are, and the Road Ahead</i> - Luminaries of the voting rights struggle, past and present, in an intimate discussion about the state of the fight and the current threats to hard-fought progress and our democracy.		Great Room 1 & 2
11:00 AM – 11:15 AM	BREAK		
11:15 AM – 12:15 PM	Morning Plenary: <i>Freedom on the Front Lines: The Fight to Protect the Right to Vote</i> - Whether registering voters across the country or pushing for progress at the Capitol, the work of voter protection, education, and mobilization is critical to our success. We discuss lessons learned in recent years and the work that must be done on the ground in 2022 to defend democracy.	Moderator: Park Cannon, Georgia State Representative Rev. Charles Williams (NAN) Virginia Kase Solomón (LWV) Nse Ufot, New Georgia Project	Great Room 1 & 2

Date	Details	Speakers	Location
12:25 PM – 1:25 PM	Breakout Sessions		
	<i>Stakeholder Engagement & Storytelling</i>	Jamal Holtz, LINK Strategic Partners; FLLA Alumnus	Studio 3
	<i>National Popular Vote</i>	Chris Pearson, Former Vermont State Senator	Studio 4
	<i>Combatting Disinformation and Defending the Black Vote</i>	DeJuana Thompson, Founder, Woke Vote Emile Washington, COO, Woke Vote	Studio 5
1:25 PM – 1:35 PM	TRANSITION		
1:35 PM – 2:30 PM	LUNCH – TED-Style Talks		
	<i>Taxation without Representation: DC Statehood and Democracy in the Nation's Capital</i>	Bo Shuff, Executive Director, DC Vote	Great Room 1 & 2
	<i>Black Women Could Save Democracy, But Only If We Save Ourselves in the Process</i>	Krystal Leaphart, Black Girls Vote	Great Room 1 & 2
	<i>Faith & Reproductive Justice</i>	Rev. Leslie Watson Wilson, PFAW	Great Room 1 & 2
2:30 PM – 3:45 PM	Afternoon Plenary: America was Never America: Democracy, Race-Based Violence, and the Struggle for Justice in Black America - In the wake of unrest and calls for change, we'll talk with leaders taking full advantage of this once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine public safety and shift systems in the interest of justice.	Moderator: Stephanie Morales, Commonwealth's Attorney, Portsmouth, VA Lonita Baker , President-elect, National Bar Association Rev. George Gilbert , Executive Director, Holy Trinity United Baptist Church Tamika Mallory , Co-Founder, Until Freedom Rev. Stephen Green , Chair, Faith For Black Lives	Great Room 1 & 2
3:45 PM – 4:00 PM	BREAK		
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Afternoon Fireside Chat: <i>Where Do We Go from Here - Community or Chaos?: Healing our Divisions and our Democracy through Bold Progressive Action</i>	Crazy Faith Ministries	Great 1 & 2
5:00 PM – 5:15 PM	Close out		
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM	Legacy Hour		Studio 5

Detailed Agenda

Date	Details	Speakers	Location
Saturday, June 18 th			
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Breakfast		
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM	Morning Fireside Chat: <i>Faith, Activism, Advocacy, and the Fight for Justice</i>	Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III Rev. Leslie Watson-Wilson, PFAW Rev. Brendolyn Boseman, Hudson Memorial CME Church	Great Room 1 & 2
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	BREAK		
10:45 AM – 11:15 AM	Briefing: <i>The State of Police Violence and Reimagining Public Safety</i>		
11:15 AM – 12:15 PM	Morning Plenary: <i>Building Community and Coalitions for Change - Lessons from the Field</i>	Devin Barrington Ward, Black Futurists Group, Atlanta Mercedes Fulbright, FLLA Alum, Former People For staff, Activist Dr. Willie Gholston , Grand Rapids Ty Hobson-Powell, Concerned Citizens	Great Room 1 & 2
12:15 PM – 12:25 PM	TRANSITION		
12:25 PM – 1:25 PM	Breakout Sessions:		
	<i>Christians Against Christians - The Religious Wrong In America</i>	Dr. Obery Hendricks , Author, Columbia University	Studio 4
	<i>Engaging the Opposition - Police Unions and Barriers to Progress</i>	Kelcey Duggan TJ Grayson , Advancement Project	Studio 5
	<i>Progressive Governance Training</i>	London Lamar , Tennessee State Senator	Studio 6
1:25 PM – 1:30 PM	TRANSITION		
1:30 PM – 2:15 PM	LUNCH Briefing: Reimagining Public Safety - The Covington Report	Moderator: Ben Jealous , President, People For the American Way Niaz Kasravi , Founder & Director Avalan Institute Svante Myrick , Executive Director, People For the American Way S. O'Neill Franklin , Law Enforcement Action Partnership	Great Room 1 & 2
2:15 PM – 2:30 PM	GROUP PHOTO		
2:30 PM – 3:30 PM	Afternoon Plenary: <i>Signs of Progress: The Ithaca Model and Mayors Delivering on Bold Solutions to Police Violence</i>	Mayor Jesse Arreguín (Berkeley, CA)	Great Room 1 & 2

Date	Details	Speakers	Location
3:30 PM – 3:45 PM	BREAK		
3:45 PM – 5:00 PM	Afternoon Keynote / Fireside: <i>Public Safety Beyond Policing: Calls to Invest in Creating Truly Safe Communities</i>	Moderator: Andrea Sosa, Policy Initiatives Manager, People For the American Way Derecka Purnell , Human Rights Lawyer and Author, <i>Becoming Abolitionists</i> Alex Vitale , Professor, Brooklyn College	Great Room 1 & 2
5:00 PM	Close out		
7:00 PM	Women's Dinner		
Sunday, June 19th			
7:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Continental Breakfast		
8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	TRANSITION		
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM	Interfaith Service		First Iconium Baptist Church, 542 Moreland Avenue, SW, Atlanta
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Closing Keynote / Fireside: <i>Defending Truth & The Freedom to Learn</i>		Great Room 1 & 2
12:30 PM – 1:00 PM	Closing Remarks	Raquel Jones, PFAW Ben Jealous, PFAW Svante Myrick, PFAW	Great Room 1 & 2

Bios



Soli Alpert is the Vice Chair of the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board. He also serves as a legislative assistant with the Berkeley City Council, where he specializes in tenant and labor rights, affordable housing, and open government. In 2019, he worked with his colleagues to unionize the City of Berkeley's Legislative Assistants with SEIU 1021, and now serves as a union steward. Soli is active with the local, county and state Democratic Parties, serving as Administrative Coordinator for the Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club of the East Bay and as an elected delegate to the California Democratic Party Central Committee.



Jeramey Anderson. Representative Anderson is a native of Moss Point, MS. He received his associate degree in criminal justice from Pearl River Community College and his bachelor's degree in homeland security from Tulane University. He currently serves as the President/Founder & CEO of nexiWorks, a digital marketing company which he founded in 2020.

Representative Anderson represents District 110 in the Mississippi Legislature covering Moss Point and Pascagoula. Representative Anderson is the youngest elected official to the Mississippi Legislature. During his time in the legislative sessions, Rep. Anderson has authored and co-authored legislation centered around increasing minimum wage, full funding for public education, wage equality, criminal justice reform, and childcare subsidies.

Representative Anderson serves on the following committees: House Judiciary B, Corrections, Drug Policy, Investigation of State Offices and Constitution.



Markus Batchelor is the Deputy Director of Leadership Programs at People For the American Way. A native Washingtonian, advocate and activist, he formerly served as the Ward 8 Representative, Vice President and the youngest-ever elected member of the DC State Board of Education. He has spent his career in government, non-profit and as an elected leader working to close the city's deep divides and advocate for our most vulnerable neighbors and disinvested communities. He previously served as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner in Congress Heights where he was raised and still lives and, as a student, DC's 52nd Youth Mayor. In 2020, he was a candidate for At-Large member of DC Council to usher in a new generation of DC leadership rooted in community and focused on expanding equity, opportunity and government accountability.



Elizabeth Bennett-Parker is the Delegate for the 45th Virginia House District. Previously, she served as the Vice Mayor of Alexandria. While Vice Mayor, Elizabeth led the effort to authorize fair collective bargaining for city employees, direct additional funding towards affordable housing, amend the city's green building policy to require net-zero public buildings, and eliminate library fines.

In her day-job, Elizabeth works for the nonprofit Together We Bake, which serves women who are returning from the criminal justice system, are unhoused, and/or are survivors of abuse. She founded Fruitcycle, a social enterprise to fight the tragic paradox of food waste and food insecurity.

She and her husband, Stephen, live in Alexandria with their rescue cat, Julep and rescue dog, Nori.



Reverend Brendolyn Lovette Jenkins Boseman is the Senior Pastor and Lead Servant of Hudson Memorial Christian Methodist Episcopal Church in Augusta, Georgia at the Annual Conference of the 6th Episcopal District by Bishop Kenneth W. Carter. Reverend Boseman is the Founder and Executive Director of Thelmani Group, Inc., a community-based non-profit organization. She works tirelessly in the areas criminal justice, environmental justice, social justice and youth leadership development. As the first female national co-chair of the African American Ministers Leadership Council and African American Ministers in Action she brings to the consciousness of other faith leaders their duty to be prophetic voices speaking to not only speaking "truth to power" but in speaking "truth with power." She believes that: "Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season. It is today that our best work can be done..." W. E. B. DuBois

Marvin Boykin is a native of Camden, South Carolina. He attended Voorhees College, in Denmark, South Carolina, where he graduated in 1973 with a Bachelor's Degree in Biology. Marvin spent 40 years as an Environmental System Operator and Manager with the City of Sumter. He was the first Black person to receive the Environmental System Operator of the Year Award for the state of South Carolina. In 2001, Marvin founded Boykin & Associates Environmental Services.

Marvin was Chairman of the Consumer Advisory Committee for the South Carolina Commission of the Blind and Chairman of the Board of Directors for individuals with disabilities in South Carolina.

Marvin was married for 40 years to the late Linda K. Tart, of Marion, South Carolina and has two sons with families of their own. He is especially proud of his four grandchildren. Marvin's lifelong motto is "Let us together make this a better world tomorrow than it is today."



R. Syntel Brown was elected to the Griffin Spalding County Schools Board of Education on May 22, 2018. He won the District One election with 67 percent of the vote and was re-elected on May 24, 2022 for a 2nd term on the Board of Education. Syntel proudly represents District One. As an educator, his efforts are promoting equity, improving the educational outcome of all students, and providing students with life skills outside of the classroom. His parents became his first teachers and instilled in him the value of a good public education. As an Award-Winning Georgia Public School Teacher, Syntel has an extensive record of student achievement. Syntel is a man of strong faith. He attends Shaw Temple African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church where he is active in the Education Ministry and the Ministry of Music.



Edward Burroughs III, Prince George's County Council Member, was sworn into office in February 2022, following a special election. In 2012 he was elected by his peers to serve as a student member on the Board of Education, representing the interests of over 130,000 Prince George's County Public School students. Following two one-year terms, Burroughs was elected to represent District 8 on the Board of Education in 2012, a position he held until his resignation in 2021. Burroughs also worked in the Office of the Prince George's County State's Attorney, leading the youth court division, and developing innovative ways to steer young people away from the criminal justice system. Most recently, he was appointed Director of Legislative Affairs where he played a key role in the development of crime prevention policies. Burroughs has a bachelor's degree in political science and is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.



Clarissa Cervantes is a mother and lifelong Riverside County resident who has devoted her career to empowering working families, fighting for social justice, and increasing participation in local, state, and national elections.

As a Legislative Field Representative to the former Ward 2 Councilmember Andy Melendrez, Clarissa helped residents create and develop innovative neighborhood projects, solve problems, and navigate City Hall. She also served as an organizer for SEIU 121RN. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from California State University, Northridge and also earned her Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.

Clarissa ran for City Council to represent the growing and diverse population that encompasses the City of Riverside. Her extensive legislative and community experiences at Riverside City Hall and beyond, give her a unique perspective of policy, labor relations, community building and an understanding of how to deliver lasting results for the neighbors within Ward 2.



Rev. Quantá Crews is a community advocate and an associate minister at The Historic Tanner Chapel A.M.E. Church in Phoenix, AZ, where she serves as coordinator of the No Limits Special Needs Ministry and the regional Richard Allen Young Adult Council. A real estate and personal property appraiser, she is passionate about the property tax profession and advocates for high quality ethical standards. She has seen firsthand how inequitable legislation and policies have been weaponized to create stumbling boulders for marginalized communities. Quantá is sounding the alarm on the need for an intimate understanding of government agencies. It is through this knowledge that opportunities are recognized and seized upon to create revolutionary change. Apart from serving God's people and appraising real estate, Quantá enjoys hanging out with her amazing sons and is an aspiring lyricist, writing poetry in her spare time.



David Crowley is a lifelong resident of Milwaukee, having grown up in Milwaukee's 53206 neighborhood. He credits the youth organization Urban Underground for saving his life. David worked as a community organizer and as a legislative aide before he was elected in 2016 to serve Wisconsin's 17th Assembly District in the Wisconsin State Legislature.

David is a member of the ACLU, Milwaukee Urban League Young Professionals and the Milwaukee NAACP. He currently lives in Milwaukee with his wife, Ericka, and his three young daughters.

David Crowley was elected to serve as Milwaukee County Executive on April 7, 2020 and was sworn on May 4, 2020.



Jessica Davis was elected to the DeLand City Commission on August 26, 2014, making her the first African American female to be elected to The DeLand City Commission.

Commissioner Davis is a graduate of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University where she earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Broadcast Journalism with a Minor in Education. She also received her Master's Degree in Education from Stetson University.

She understands the sense of urgency needed in serving the citizens of DeLand and has a vested interest in the community. Understanding how economic development is directly related to communities and schools is vital to short and long-term success. Jessica understands such interrelationships and will ensure to the best of her ability that the citizens of DeLand can be provided the best quality of life for themselves and their family.



Kelcey Duggan is a senior research associate at the Community Resource Hub for Safety and Accountability. They have a background in public policy and the ways gender, race, class, disability, sexual orientation, etc. intersect with criminalization. They began working for the Hub in 2019 and immediately set out to explore obstacles to police accountability and transforming community safety. This led to a research memo on the role police unions play as obstacles and further research into how to push back against police union power that hinders community safety and the pursuit of justice and police accountability. They currently reside in Philadelphia.



Natasha Dupee is committed to changing, creating, and defending policies that ensure that all people have greater access to a quality life. A native Washingtonian, Natasha serves residents of Washington, DC in the elected position of Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for single-member district 7E04. For the past decade, Natasha's professional experience spanned education and health systems while focusing on pipeline programs and policies that address the social determinants of health. Natasha is completing a Master of Public Health Policy at the George Washington University - Milken Institute School of Public Health and previously earned a master's degree in education from The University of Missouri - St. Louis.



Major Neill Franklin, a 34-year police veteran, retired from the Maryland State Police in 1999 after rising through the ranks (undercover narcotics agent to a commander within the Bureau of Drug and Criminal Enforcement). Post retirement, Major Franklin worked an additional 10 years with the Baltimore Police Department as the head of training and with the Maryland Transit Police Force overseeing criminal and internal investigations. In 2010 he was appointed executive director for the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP), which he held until December 31, 2020.

Major Franklin has become a regular contributor on CNN, FOX and MSNBC, appeared in a number of documentaries and his writings have been printed in the LA Times, Washington Post and New York Times. Additionally, Major Franklin has been accepted in U.S. district and Maryland circuit courts as an expert witness on police policy, practices, training, use of force, and criminal investigations.



Dominic Frongillo is a former councilmember and deputy supervisor of Caroline, New York. Internationally-recognized advocate Dominic Frongillo made history at age 22 by becoming the youngest person ever elected to serve on the Town Council in Caroline, New York. An award-winning changemaker, in 2015, Frongillo co-founded Elected Officials to Protect America, a nonpartisan network of more than 2,000 state and local lawmakers in all 50 states to protect our planet and people. In 2012, when fracking threatened New York State, Frongillo organized more than 1,000 lawmakers to help win New York's statewide ban on fracking and divestment from fossil fuels, inspiring governments worldwide to follow. In 2018, Frongillo was awarded the inaugural Roddenberry Fellowship alongside Black Lives Matter founder Alicia Garza and Occupy Wall Street founder Micah White. Frongillo and his work have appeared in more than 500 stories in major international news media including CNN, New York Times, and BBC News.



Brian Garcia was born and raised in Arizona by parents from El Salvador and Mexico. He is a member of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. Brian holds a Bachelor in Global Studies, a Master of Legal Studies, and a Juris Doctor of Law (Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law) from Arizona State University.

Currently, Brian works for the Florence Project where he represents unaccompanied children. He works with children who often have suffered abuse, abandonment, neglect, or other emotional and physical trauma. Additionally, Brian serves as President of the Tempe Union High School District where he represents 13,000 students, 1,300 staff, and over 160,000 residents. Prior to joining the Florence Project, Brian worked for the U.S. House of Representatives, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, and the Arizona Secretary of State.

In his spare time, Brian enjoys vocal Jazz, triathlons, increasing civic engagement, and sharing Arizona fun facts.



Reverend George Gilbert, Jr. is Assistant to the Pastor at Holy Trinity United Baptist Church; Executive Director of The Center for Racial Equity and Justice; Professor of Urban Ministry, and Hermeneutics at the Washington Baptist Seminary; Chairman of the Social Actions Committee of the Missionary Baptist Ministers' Conference of Washington, D.C., Chairman of the Social Justice Commission of the Baptist Convention of D.C. and member of the Social Justice Commission of the Progressive National Baptist Convention.

The Howard Alumni honored Reverend Gilbert with the Community Activist Award (2012). Mayor Brown of Buffalo, NY proclaimed December 30, Reverend George C. Gilbert, Jr. Day. In 2020, he was heard all over the world responding to President Trump tear gassing protestors and holding a Bible for a photo opportunity in front of a church. Rev. Gilbert's famous rebuttal resounded, "You may have the Bible in your hand, but you don't have it in your heart."



Jeremy Gray currently serves as the Alabama State Representative of the 83rd District, where he serves on the Commerce and Small Business, Health, Public Safety, and Homeland Security committees. He is also the founder of Elevate Your Grind (EYG), Inc., a motivational and clothing brand as well as The Curtis House, a nonprofit organization that serves as a resource hub in one of the most vulnerable neighborhoods in his hometown of Opelika, AL. Rep. Gray has sponsored legislation this year that would introduce yoga to public schools, provide matching funds for high-risk, high-reward tech startups, attract electric bike companies to Alabama, make the expungement process easier for those who are seeking a second chance in life, and require schools to provide water stations as well as clean filtered water. Representative Gray recently graduated from Auburn University College with an Executive MBA degree with a concentration in leadership. Rep. Gray is committed to making Alabama a state inclusive for everyone.



Nichole Harris-Rosebud is one of the only two women and the youngest to serve as mayor of Tutwiler, Mississippi. She is currently serving her third term as the town's chief executive officer, where she is responsible for all aspects of general management.

Nichole Harris-Rosebud is a mother, educator, coach, veteran, mentor, community organizer, and the Mayor of Tutwiler. Wanting to help others ignited a passion in Harris-Rosebud to become a public servant. Mayor Harris is a graduate of Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU), where she received a BS in Biology and a Master of Arts in Teaching. Harris-Rosebud is a graduate of Arkansas State University where she specialized in Educational Leadership. Harris-Rosebud is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Mayor Harris-Rosebud has two daughters Tayia Hayes and La'Zarreia Hayes and is married to Mississippi State Representative Tracey Rosebud.



Obrey Hendricks is one of the foremost commentators on the intersection of religion and political economy in America. His recent book, *Christians Against Christianity: How Right-Wing Evangelicals Are Destroying Our Nation and Our Faith* (Beacon Press, 2021) has gathered wide acclaim.

Dr. Hendricks has served in the Religion and Foreign Policy Working Group at the U.S. Department of State under Secretaries Clinton and Kerry and was a member of the Faith Advisory Council of the Democratic National Committee. He is a Distinguished Senior Fellow at The Democracy Collaborative in Washington, DC; has been an Affiliated Scholar at the Center for American Progress; is on the Advisory Board of the Institute of Christian Socialism; and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI).

An Ordained Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Hendricks holds the Master of Divinity with academic honors from Princeton Theological Seminary, and both the M.A. and Ph.D. in Religions of Late Antiquity from Princeton University.



Tyrell M. Holcomb is a fourth generation Washingtonian and proud alumnus of HD Woodson Senior High School. He furthered his education at Washington Bible College and the University of the District of Columbia. His legacy of service in community work began he began as a participant of the Marion Barry Youth Leadership Institute. He went on to serve as Youth Mayor of the District of Columbia & Chair of the DC Youth Advisory Council. Since taking office in 2017 he's been a progressive voice in Ward 7, championing advocacy for jobs, economic development, public safety, responsive government, equity in education, an equitable health care system, food access, and issues effecting youth and seniors. Since 2018 he's served as Chair of ANC 7F. Under his leadership, the Commission has put over \$100,000 toward community initiatives, grants and scholarship and negotiated over \$500,000 in community benefit investment funds.



Jamal Holtz has a wide breadth of experience working with community leaders, non-profits, elected leaders, and government officials. Jamal currently serves on many organizational and corporate boards, advising executives and officials on issues related to DEI, community engagement, and organizational strategy. Jamal has extensive local government experience from working at numerous agencies, such as in the DC Mayor's Office of Community Relations and Services as well as a stint at the DC Department of Employment Services. At LINK, Jamal helps lead the firm's public affairs and local government portfolio, and DEI and Belonging work. Jamal has experience working on national and local political and issue-based campaigns, in the DC region and beyond.



Reverend Amiri B. Hooker serves as senior pastor of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church in Lake City, South Carolina. Reverend Hooker has prophetically served churches with a passion towards community organizer and social justice advocating. He has chaired and continues to advise the Advocacy Ministry Team of the South Carolina United Methodist Annual Conference and chaired the inaugural Racial Reconciliation Design Team (RRDT) (dealing with Racism and Justice issues in South Carolina). A graduate of Methodist University in Fayetteville NC and Gammon Seminary. He currently serves as a board member of the South Carolina Christian Action Council (SCCAC) (The States largest an oldest ecumenical advocacy group centering on justice, poverty, and education) and Hooker is an active member of the National African American Ministers Leadership Council (AAMLC) serving as the chair of the MICAH Group. Furthermore, Reverend Hooker is one of the Tri-Chairs in the South Carolina Division Poor People's Campaign working to build a broad, fusion movement that can unite poor and impacted communities across the state and target issues of voter engagement. Rev Hooker is a member and trainer for the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) & member of the executive committee of South Carolina Caucus of BMCR (Black Methodist for Church Renewal). Rev Hooker is the newly Installed Coordinator of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of BMCR. He is also the author of "Preaching In the Midst Of: How Black Preaching Has Changed in the COVID-19 Pan- demic," from the Advocate Press and on Amazon.



Shakeyla Ingram was born and raised in District 2. She was determined to overcome adversity after experiencing poverty as a child. Shakeyla grew up in a family of small business owners, including her grandparents, who owned Ramsey Street Barbershop for over 30 years.

She learned what it was like to be a transplant and how to adapt during her time in Atlanta. She worked in community relations as well as volunteering with numerous nonprofit organizations for life-changing causes that benefited the community.

Moving back into Fayetteville, NC - she has devoted her time to her community and is ready to work for and empower its residents.

As an animal lover, Shakeyla rescued and adopted her fur son, Marley. She serves as a big sister to her younger brother and a mentor to the youth in the community. Shakeyla has one niece and is a bonus aunt to many of her friends' children.



Rev. Mary Johnson is a retired Elder in the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. She currently serves on the Board of Ordained Ministry and as the Chair of the Orders of Elders.

She earned a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Counseling Ministry from Erskine Theological Seminary, Due West, SC and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of SC, Columbia. She was previously employed by SCANA Corporation, Columbia, SC in various positions within Finance, Information Systems Technology, and the Internal Auditing Departments.

Her motto is, "...Lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).



Von Johnson is a seasoned external affairs professional with over a decade of experience in public relations, government/community relations, political campaigns, fundraising, marketing, and communications. Von currently serves as Managing Director, Statewide External Affairs for Teach For America Florida where he directs the organization's statewide strategy, priorities, and policy agenda in partnership with executive and legislative branch members, local elected officials, and strategic partners. Von previously served as a major gifts officer at Louisiana State University's E. J. Ourso College of Business. Von was elected to the DeLand City Commission in 2010. While in office, he was recognized by the Florida League of Women Voters as The Future of Florida: A Young Elected Official to Watch, the Volusia/Flagler County Business Report's Young Business Leader of the Year, a Top 40 Under 40 Leader by the Daytona Beach News Journal, and one of Volusia County's Most Influential People by the Floridian View Magazine.



Raquel Jones is originally from Orlando, Florida, and currently based in Washington, DC serving as the Director of Leadership Programs at People For the American Way, where she is the lead builder of three national programs.

For the last six years she has been essential to the growth of the Young Elected Official's Network, where she has committed to supporting the newest generation of progressive trailblazers and works to foster their leadership and professional growth. She oversees the successful planning and execution of the Front Line Leaders Academy, a youth values-based training program, and she has created space for women legislators to convene and organize through the expansion of the network's Women's Caucus Fellowship. Through her commitment to public service, Ms. Jones is working to create a new political system of truly representative government that will amplify the voices of youth and marginalized communities; and she is spearheading programs to bring both a racial and gender equity lens to progressive policy making.

Ms. Jones spent her undergrad career studying political science at Florida A&M University, and as a scholar in the Intelligence Community's Center for Academic Excellence, researching economic security between the United States and South Africa. She has worked to analyze state and local government, craft public policy, and create social programs as an intern in the Florida State House; and has since dedicated her career to fighting to enhance the quality of life for the most vulnerable in our communities and creating a new political system of truly representative government that amplifies the voices of youth and marginalized communities.

Raquel is a single mom to an energetic five-year-old, who is passionate about equity and inclusion, fashion and art, family and faith, travel, black culture, and liberation, as well as long-lasting progressive change through youth activism.



Maryam Khan is a recently elected state legislator in the state of Connecticut. She was the first Muslim elected to the Connecticut House of Representatives. Prior to being a legislator, Maryam served as Vice President on the Board of Education for the town of Windsor. When Maryam was elected to the Board of Education in 2017, she was the first Muslim woman to be elected to any office in the state of Connecticut. Aside from politics, Maryam is a special education teacher and mother of three children. Maryam is of Pakistani-descent and was born in Karachi, Pakistan. Her family migrated to the United States when Maryam was 5 years old. They lived in New York City for several years before moving to Windsor. Maryam serves her community through many volunteer activities including serving as a Youth Mentor and Sunday School administrator at her mosque in Windsor.



London Lamar has dedicated her life and career to uplifting the lived experiences of families and communities. She currently represents the 33rd Senate District as the youngest female and African American legislator in Tennessee General Assembly History. Senator Lamar advocates strong schools, healthy families, and safe neighborhoods. She has passed 10 pieces of legislation in the state house, 1 in the Senate and 6 have become public laws. She passed legislation that advances maternal health, human trafficking, criminal justice, and voting rights.

Senator Lamar holds membership to two Senate committees: the Judiciary committee and the Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources committee. Lamar also chairs the Shelby County Delegation of State Legislators, and serves on the Executive Board of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators and National Organization of Black Elected Women as an Executive Committee Member.



Krystal Leaphart is the Senior Policy Analyst at the National Birth Equity Collaborative. In this role, Krystal, is responsible for helping to shape the NBEC federal, state and local policy and advocacy priorities. Using her decade of experience in legislative advocacy and grassroots activism, she will make recommendations to elected officials and important stakeholders on the best way to advance Black maternal health and birth equity using a reproductive justice lens.

Prior to joining the National Birth Equity Collaborative, Krystal worked to make sure that elected black women across the country centered black women and girls in their policy agendas at the National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women. Krystal is a Detroit native and considers Washington DC and Baltimore, MD her second and third homes. She attended Howard University to pursue a B.A. in Sociology.



Tamika Mallory is a nationally recognized organizer and the co-founder of Until Freedom, an intersectional social justice organization that addresses systemic racial injustice. With Until Freedom, Tamika has led efforts to fight for justice for Atatiana Jefferson, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, along with other victims of police violence and oppression. Prior to launching Until Freedom in 2019, Tamika was co-president of Women’s March. For her work as a leader in the fight against police brutality and gun violence, Tamika was recognized as one of the 2017 Time 100 and Forbes 50 Most Powerful Leaders. She co-hosts “Street Politicians” with Mysonne Linen on NewsOne.



Francesca Menes is the Deputy Organizing Director of Local Progress, a movement of local elected officials advancing a racial and economic justice agenda through all levels of local government. In this role, Francesca drives Local Progress’s southern regional infrastructure building, recruitment, member, and leadership development strategy while identifying, cultivating relationships and buy-in from key allies and organizational partners; including Florida where she also works in strategic alignment with state partners to develop local and state legislative and issue organizing campaigns. She also leads the growth and formation of identity caucuses across the network.

Francesca is a political educator, legislative and policy strategist, entrepreneur, and former television host committed to creating spaces to educate, inform, and engage our people on the issues that are important in their daily lives; helping them to understand that the personal is political and democratizing knowledge. She is the daughter of working-class Haitian immigrants raised in Miami’s Little Haiti community.



Dr. Otis Moss III is Senior Pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, Ill. Dr. Otis Moss III is a preacher, activist and author. Over the last two decades, Dr. Moss has practiced and preached a Black theology that unapologetically calls attention to the problems of mass incarceration, environmental justice and economic inequality. A third-generation warrior for civil and human rights, Dr. Moss is committed to preaching a prophetic message of love and justice, which he believes are inseparable companions that form the foundation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Dr. Moss is an honors graduate of Morehouse College, and earned a Master of Divinity from Yale Divinity School, and a Doctor of Ministry from Chicago Theological Seminary. Dr. Moss has a passion for preaching, which led him back to the classroom. In early 2022, Dr. Moss was named a professor of homiletics at McAfee, where he will help up-and-coming preachers build and strengthen their own preaching ministries. The work and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the pastoral ministry of his father, Dr. Otis Moss, Jr. of Cleveland, Ohio, have been primary mentors for his spiritual formation.



Mariah Parker (they/them) has served as Commissioner for Athens-Clarke County District 2 since 2018. Currently in their second term, they have focused on public-health driven crime prevention, youth and worker empowerment, and innovative approaches to affordable housing. They completed their PhD in Language and Literacy Education at the University of Georgia in May 2022.



Ty Hobson-Powell is a lifelong community advocate. After graduating from high school, he went on to attend Howard University at the age of 13. He eventually gained his bachelor's degree at age 15 from the University of Baltimore and his master's degree at 17 from Liberty University. Ty then began his career in public service with DC's Dept. of Employment Services, supporting some of the District's most disadvantaged residents through his work with the Marion Barry Youth Leadership Institute and the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program. He also worked on the Hillary Clinton presidential campaign in 2016 as a field organizer in Erie, Pennsylvania. Ty serves as Founder and Executive Director for Concerned Citizens Demanding Change, and National Director of Leadership Development & Democracy, CASA in Action.



Quentin "Q" Williams serves the 100th District in the Connecticut General Assembly. He is the first African-American to represent the City of Middletown in Connecticut's legislature. He serves as the Chair of the Housing Committee and founded the Downtown Workgroup & Main Street Caucus.

Rep. "Q" championed several bills guaranteeing the right to virtual visitation and monitoring for nursing home residents, creating pedestrian safety zones, and expanding rent commissions to mediate unfair rent increases. Quentin serves Excellence Community Schools as their Director of Advocacy and Policy.

Quentin graduated from Bryant University, earned a MPA from Villanova University, and a DEI Certificate from Cornell University. "Q" was named "40 Under 40" on three occasions, an American Council for Young Political Leaders Delegate (2016), State Legislative Leader Foundation Emerging Leader (2020), a NewDeal Leader (2021), Robert J. Thompson Eastern Leadership Academy Fellow (2021), Hunt-Kean Leadership Fellow (2021), and a Cahn Public Service Fellow (2022).



Channel Powe has been a champion for communities, public schools, families and children for over a decade. Her work as an equity activist began as a child advocate in Detroit, Michigan which led to the City of Phoenix and Maricopa County appointments to boards and commissions. She served seven and a half years on the Balsz Elementary School District Governing Board, with her term ending in December 2020. In 2015, the Arizona School Board Association named Channel Powe Advocate of the Year. Currently, Ms. Powe is an education, political and equity consultant.



Sydney Richardson-Gorski, a California native, serves as the Policy Associate at the Lawyers' Committee in Washington DC. Sydney works across projects to advance the organization's civil rights priorities by leading and coordinating advocacy before federal, state, and local legislative bodies and executive agencies. Prior to her current role, Sydney was an integral member of the Lawyers' Committee 2020 Election Protection team supporting the largest nonpartisan voter protection effort and their voter assistance hotline 1-866-OUR-VOTE. Sydney has also held a number of roles on both the local and national levels in the fight for racial and social justice.

Sydney is a summa cum laude graduate of Menlo College; a retired collegiate athlete; a former Student Body President; a recipient of the Google Cloud Academic All-District award, and a People For 2021 Front Line Leaders Academy Fellow. Sydney will be attending Georgetown University Law Center as a Blume Scholar in the fall.



Alissa Jean Schafer serves on the Broward County Soil and Water Conservation District in South Florida, where she also works to amplify and share the stories that need to be told through her firm, Copper Stamp Strategy - Stronger Voices for a Stronger Future. Alissa is a frequent media spokesperson on topics ranging from energy policy and the utility regulatory landscape to environmental justice. She strives to highlight the intersectionality of politics across all issues. She is a recipient of the Solutions Project ONE100 award, Southern Regional Director for Young Elected Officials Network, Climate Power Florida Advisory Board Member, Local Progress Florida Committee Member, a regular contributor to the Sun Sentinel South Florida 100, and a research and communications manager for the Energy and Policy Institute, a national utility watchdog.

Alissa holds an MS in Communication Science from Grand Valley State University in her home state of Michigan, along with her BA in Communications from Aquinas College.



Greg Scott, a native of Norristown, was raised by a single mom. His mother Peggy instilled a sense of public and community service in him at an early age. In 6th grade, he met President Clinton and asked him about education and healthcare policy. After asking Clinton to "put his money where his mouth is," the president returned to his community to announce an education initiative at Norristown High School. This experience showed Greg how government could work for the people.

In high school, Greg became Norristown's first Junior Burrough Councilman and joined the fire department at age 16. During the pandemic, Greg mobilized the Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium to provide over 2000 tests and distribute over 3200 vaccines for the community.

Greg holds degrees from Chestnut Hill College and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. When he was elected Magisterial District Judge in 2015, he became the first Black judge in county history and the youngest sitting judge in Pennsylvania.



Bo Shuff serves as the Executive Director for DC Vote having been promoted from Director of Advocacy in June of 2017. Bo has spent the last twenty years on the front lines of both electoral and advocacy politics. From being a member of the Gore election team in Florida in 2000 to being on the staff of HRC from the Lawrence decision through the 2006 Marriage Amendments, Bo somehow finds himself engaged in some of the hottest political moments. In addition to organizational advocacy work his electoral efforts led to a progressive majority in the Washington State Senate and, as Campaign Manager, the election of Mayor Muriel Bowser. He joined DC Vote in 2016 with an eye to achieving full equality for the residents of the 51st State, Washington DC.



Douglas Slaughter is the Senior Pastor of Second Baptist Church, Aiken, South Carolina. With 40 years in ministry and leadership, Pastor Slaughter has led Second Baptist since 1992.

Pastor Slaughter attended the College of William & Mary in Virginia majoring in Classical Studies with a concentration in Greek language and history. In 1979, Pastor Slaughter moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to attend the Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center. He graduated with a Master of Divinity degree in Old and New Testament studies.

Pastor Slaughter's professional career in ministry began in 1985 as the minister of Christian education at the St. Paul Community Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York. His work included leading many community projects, including the Nehemiah Project, an affordable housing program which was responsible for building over 2000 affordable homes in the East New York and Brownsville sections of Brooklyn.

Rev. Dr. Susan K. Smith, the founder of Crazy Faith Ministries in Columbus, Ohio, was formerly the senior pastor of Advent United Church of Christ, where she served for 22 years. She graduated from Occidental College in 1976, where she earned her BA in English literature, and is a 1986 graduate of Yale Divinity School, where she earned her M.Div. She earned her D. Min. from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, studying under the late Rev. Drs. Samuel Proctor and Charles E. Booth.

She now serves as a national organizer and trainer for the African American Ministers Leadership Council (AAMLC), a division of People For the American Way, and the Director of Clergy and Resource Development for the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc. (SDPC). She also serves as a co-chair of the Minority Outreach Subcommittee of the Nonpartisan Ohio Voter Outreach Committee (NOVOC).

Virginia Kase Solomón is the CEO of the League of Women Voters of the United States, a 100-year-old voting rights organization that emerged out of the suffrage movement and continues to empower voters and defend democracy today. In her role as chief executive, Virginia is leading the organization to build power by engaging in advocacy, defending democracy and protecting voters through legislation and litigation, and field organizing to ensure voting rights for all. Prior to joining LWV she served as COO of CASA, an organization at the forefront of the immigrant rights movement, representing nearly 100,000 members. With more than 20 years' experience working in the non-profit sector Virginia is a leading advocate for participatory elections and democracy. She has testified before Congress on election administration, appeared on various television news programs, published multiple opinion pieces, and is regularly quoted in news articles from Teen Vogue to the New York Times.



DeJuana L. Thompson is a political and social strategist providing innovative and sustainable engagement methods and models for candidates, campaigns, and community organizations.

DeJuana is the current President and CEO of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute. The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, part of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is a cultural and educational research center that promotes a comprehensive understanding of the significance of civil rights developments in Birmingham.

DeJuana is a founding partner with Think Rubix, a social innovation consultancy which helps nonprofits, businesses, and governments to engage in systems change to harness the transformative power of culture. She is also the founder of Woke Vote, an organization designed to engage, mobilize, and turnout African American voters in the South through campus and faith-based outreach, strategic media outreach, culturally relevant GOTV efforts and training for organizers.

Prior to Think Rubix, Thompson served as National Deputy Director for Community Engagement and the National African American Engagement Director for the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Before working at the DNC, Thompson was appointed by the Obama White House to serve as a Senior Advisor in the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Thompson is a Dial Fellow with the prestigious Emerson Collective. She's appeared on MSNBC, CNN, in Essence Magazine, The New York Times and the Washington Post among others as a thought leader on race, politics and social engagement strategy.

Awet Tsegai is a lifelong resident of the Town of East Hartford, an East Hartford High School graduate Class of 2012, and a current member of the Town Council. On the council, he sits on various subcommittees such as the Real Estate Acquisition & Disposition, Personal and Pension, Investigation & Audit, Fee's, and Town Owned Property Other than Real Estate. Tsegai works at the Connecticut General Assembly as the special assistant to the House Majority Leader Representative Jason Rojas. Tsegai volunteers his time serving on different boards and commissions such as the East Hartford YMCA, East Hartford Alumni Association and Education Foundation, East Hartford Democratic Town Committee, Urban League of Greater Hartford, Suburban Professional's Achieving Real Change, The Metropolitan District Commission (regional water company serving Greater Hartford) and the Greater Hartford Young Dems. His hobbies include biking, running, hiking, playing soccer, and golfing.



Nsé Ufot is the Chief Executive Officer of the New Georgia Project (NGP) and its affiliate, New Georgia Project Action Fund (NGP AF). Nsé leads both organizations with a data-informed approach and a commitment to developing tools that leverage technology to make it easier for every voter to engage in every election. Nsé and her team are also developing Georgia's home-grown talent by training and organizing local activists across the state. She has dedicated her life and career to working on civil, human and workers' rights issues and leads two organizations whose complementary aim is to strengthen Georgia's democracy. Under Nsé's leadership, NGP has registered nearly 600K Georgians to vote.



Ashley Vanorny hails from Cedar Rapids, IA where in 2017 she became the second youngest councilmember to serve Iowa's second largest city. She serves on the Development Committee, Public Safety and Youth Services Committee, Safe, Equitable, and Thriving (S.E.T.) Grant Committee, Area Ambulance Board of Directors, and is a Corridor Municipal Policy Organization member.

She learned the value of hard work by helping out on her family's Century farm. She achieved her Master's in Healthcare Administration in 2021 and works in healthcare leadership. She is active on various boards and nonprofit organizations including the League of Women Voters of Linn County Board, Linn County Foster Care Review Board, and Iowa League of Cities Executive Board. She is a 2018 New Leaders Council alum and a YEO Co-Director for the Midwest Region.

She received recognition as YEO's 35 under 35 (2020) and the Corridor Business Journal's 40 under 40 (2021).



Alex S. Vitale is Professor of Sociology and Coordinator of the Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center, and a Visiting Professor at London Southbank University. He has spent the last 30 years writing about policing and consults both police departments and human rights organizations internationally. Prof. Vitale is the author of *City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics* and *The End of Policing*. His academic writings on policing have appeared in *Policing and Society*, *Police Practice and Research*, *Mobilization*, and *Contemporary Sociology*. He is also a frequent essayist, whose writings have been published in *The NY Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, *Vice News*, *Fortune*, and *USA Today*. He has also appeared on CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, NPR, PBS, *Democracy Now*, and *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah*.



Timothy Jerome Walker, Jr., better known as TJ, is the son of Dr. Timothy Sr. and Annette Walker. He has a BS in Psychology from THE North Carolina Central University. He currently ministers the gospel throughout the United States. TJ also owns an auto rental and auto sales business. He has a nonprofit named WeFit, Incorporated that focuses on at-risk male youth. God has blessed him with several talents, but his favorite extracurricular activities include singing and skill development basketball training for the youth. He is involved in a host of community empowerment groups and boards. TJ is married to Breona Walker and they have three children. He is an active member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated and city councilman of Ward 4 in Rocky Mount, NC. TJ gives God all the glory, honor, and praise for using his life for service.



Emile Washington is the Chief Operating Officer for Woke Vote whose mission is to invest in the Activation, Long-term Engagement, Training and Development of New Organizers, and mobilization of historically disengaged voters of color. He is also a Co-Founder of Artists & Athletes United for Social Change where they are connecting the brightest minds in politics with the biggest names in sports and entertainment to make tomorrow's world a better place. His background in government, grassroots organizing, & the entertainment industry is a unique combination of experiences that enables him to connect key power players with the right causes. After leaving Capitol Hill, he worked as a Regional Field Director in Ohio for President Obama's reelection team. He is also the founder of 360 Solutions, LLC., a strategic management consulting firm. Formerly he served as manager to Jon Batiste of the CBS Late Show, securing national commercial deals for Jon and elevating his platform with partnerships at Sing for Hope and ASCAP Foundation.



Jessica Weaver is a public servant, a young elected official, and a proud UConn alum. In November 2019, Jessica was elected to the Board of Education in her hometown of Newington, CT at the age of 21 making her the youngest elected official ever in her town. She was re-elected this past November. During her undergraduate and graduate career Jessica served in a variety of governmental offices including the CT Office of the Treasurer, Congressman John Larson's Office, the CT Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, and the CT 2Gen Anti-Poverty Program. She also served as the Legislative Advocacy Fellow for the YWCA Hartford Region and was a part of the 2019 Obama Foundation Hartford Community Leadership Corps. Jessica currently represents Connecticut as an Ambassador for the United State of Women and serves the CT Office of the Treasurer as a Corporate Governance Analyst. This is her first YEO Summit!



Charles E. Williams II is the Pastor of the Historic King Solomon Baptist Church in Detroit, the Michigan Chair of the National Action Network, and a long-time participant of the AAMLC and AAMIA in People For the American Way. He can often be heard on Sirius XM Channel 126 as the co-host of "Keeping it Real" with Rev. Al Sharpton. Charles is engaged in research at the University of Michigan in the Center on Assets, Education, and Inclusion and at Poverty Solutions. His research interests include poverty, inequality, health disparities, and the intersection of race and religion. Charles enjoys training for marathons, sailing, and spending time with his wife, Angela, and their two young children.



Dr. Mercuria Williams, Past President of the 40,000 member Georgia Association of Educators, an affiliate of the National Education Association, spent most of her career as a high school English teacher, a school library media specialist, and Coordinator of Media Services for Atlanta Public Schools. Throughout her career she actively participated in her professional organizations and became a leader in advocacy for great public schools for all students.

Now Retired, Dr. Williams is currently advocating for children as a member of the Interfaith Children's Movement of Metropolitan Atlanta and as the National Educational Task Force Chair for the African American Ministers Leadership Council/Ministers in Action which are affiliated with People for the American Way.

An ordained elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Dr. Williams serves as Chair of District Studies and Special Events. In her local church she is the Minister of Congregational Care.

Dr. Williams received a Bachelor's Degree in English from Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia, Master's Degree in Teaching from Trinity College, Washington, D.C., a Master's Degree in School Library Science from Atlanta University, a Leadership Certificate and Doctorate of Philosophy in Instructional Technology from Georgia State University. In 2010, she received the Master's in Divinity Degree with certification in Black Studies and Women's Studies at Candler School of Theology Emory University.



Nantasha Williams is a New York City Councilmember for District 27 in Southeast Queens. Nantasha is a community leader, social justice advocate, and political organizer committed to affecting real change in her community. Nationally recognized as a political strategist, she dedicates her life in service to marginalized communities throughout the country. Nantasha has served numerous roles in government such as Executive Director, Chief of Staff, Legislative Director, and as a Community & External Affairs Manager. Nantasha also “moonlights” as an activist, confronting issues around racial justice, women, and girls. In recognition of her exceptional work, Nantasha was honored as one of Albany’s Top 40 under 40 by City & State. As a councilmember creating new economic opportunities, youth development, housing, and protecting our seniors are her top priorities. It is her mission to serve the residents of her hometown, Southeast Queens, New York and continue its rich legacy into the future.



Reverend Leslie Watson Wilson is the current National Director of African American Religious Affairs (AARA) for People For the American Way. Leslie is responsible for program planning, implementation of the two core programs that make up AARA: African American Ministers Leadership Council and African American Ministers In Action. She also created new opportunities to inform and engage the 2400 faith leader membership.

Reverend Wilson is the former national policy director for the Balm In Gilead and served for nine years as the director of the Multicultural Programs Department of the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice where she managed and developed La Iniciativa Latina (LIL), the Women of Color Partnership Project (WOCPP), and the National Black Church Initiative (NBCI). Leslie has served as the national coordinator and field director for the National Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and the coordinator of the Public Policy Institute of the Citizenship Education Fund.



Chris Xiong is a political and community organizer in the Twin Cities area. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota in Political Science and History. Chris is the Legislative Aide to Saint Paul City Councilmember Nelsie Yang of Ward 6. His job is to help conduct studies and write policies to benefit the community and to serve as a representative of the office. He has a great wealth of experience in public policy leadership management, outreach coordination, political organizing, and fundraising. Chris loves to connect with everyone he meets, working to build a better future for all of us.

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